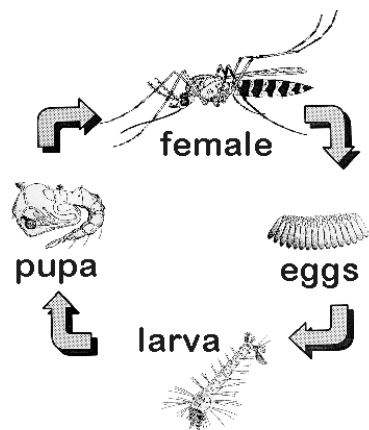


"Bug of the Month"

It is time the time of year to draw attention to mosquitoes and what homeowners can do to prevent mosquito bites and control mosquitoes around their homes. This is especially important due to the threat of West Nile Virus, which was reported for the first time last year in horses and birds in Washington State. There are many things that people can do around their homes to reduce mosquito populations and protect themselves from mosquito bites.

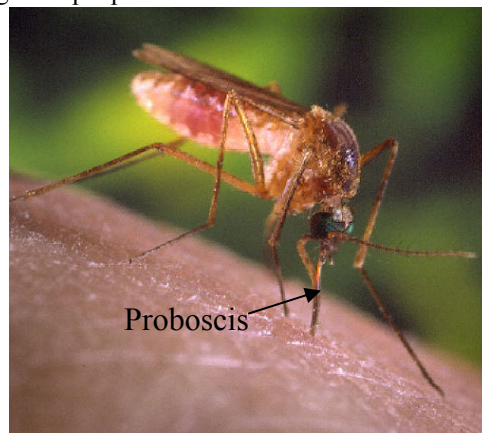
WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE? Mosquitoes are insects having 3 pairs of legs, 3 distinct body parts (head, thorax and abdomen), and antennae. The most distinguishing characteristic of a female mosquito is the elongated piercing-sucking mouthpart known as a proboscis. There are a number of insects that are



commonly mistaken for mosquitoes such as midges and crane flies. A close look at these insects reveal that they lack a proboscis.

Female mosquitoes lay eggs on water or moist surfaces near water. The larvae are commonly called "wigglers" for the motion they make during movement in water. The pupa is a non-feeding development stage.

They use a tumbling motion in the water and thus, are commonly called "tumblers". The adult mosquito emerges from the pupa. A short period, usually less than 30 minutes, is required to allow the wings of the adult to stiffen before it can fly.



A female mosquito is recognized by its proboscis which it uses to feed on blood.

WHAT DO THEY DO? Mosquitoes can be an annoying, serious problem in many areas. They cause more human suffering than any other insect. Bites generally result in itchy, painful "wheals" that may take some time to resolve. Some mosquitoes are capable of transmitting disease such as malaria, yellow fever, and encephalitis, including West Nile Virus. More than a million people die from mosquito-borne diseases every year.

- **MANAGEMENT.** To help control mosquitoes around the home:

- Destroy or dispose of old tires, cans, buckets or other containers that can collect and hold water.
- Clean debris from rain gutters and remove any standing water under or around structures or on flat roofs.
- Change water in bird baths or wading pools at least once a week. Stock ornamental ponds with top feeding fish.
- Fill or drain puddles, ditches, cesspools and septic tanks, and fill, drain, or remove tree holes.
- Do not allow water to accumulate in the saucers of flowerpots or in pet dishes for more than 2 days.
- Check for trapped water in tarps used to cover boats, cars, etc. Arrange the tarp to drain the water.
- Space sprays can be used to quickly kill mosquitoes but will not provide long lasting control.

- **PERSONAL PROTECTION.** Proper use of insect repellents is very effective in preventing mosquito bites:

- Use insect repellents containing N, N-Diethyl-3-Methylbenzamide (DEET). Studies have shown that DEET is the most effective repellent commercially available. Choose products that contain 30-35% DEET (lower concentrations for children). Products with higher concentrations of DEET are not more effective and may cause skin problems. Pregnant and nursing women should minimize use of repellents.
- Apply repellent sparingly only to exposed skin or clothing. Keep repellents away from eyes, nostrils and lips: do not inhale or ingest repellents or get them into the eyes.
- Avoid applying repellents to portions of children's hands that are likely to have contact with eyes or mouth.
- Use repellent sparingly; one application will last approximately 4-6 hours. Saturation does not increase efficacy.
- Reapply repellents if washed off after swimming or other water activities.
- Wear long sleeve shirts and pants outdoors during peak mosquito activity time periods.

MORE QUESTIONS? Please do not hesitate to give your "Bug Docs" a call at comm.: (360) 315-4450, DSN: 322-4450 or you can e-mail us at mail@ndvecc.navy.mil.